

Managers Managing Pressure

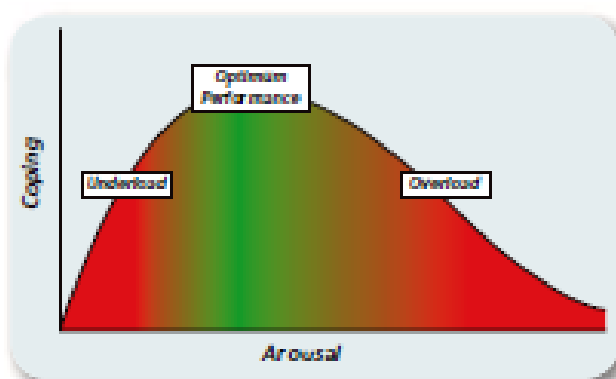
Translating Policy into Practice

Most UK organisations are now aware of their responsibilities in relation to pressure and stress at work, and have in place related policies and standards. However, what is often overlooked is:

- that writing policies or guidance is not enough; to make a real impact, people's behaviour has to change.
- that the behaviour of line managers has a strong influence on employee psychological health at work.

This understanding was key to shaping BG Group's recent efforts to proactively improve the management of pressure and stress at work throughout their global energy business.

BG Group's guidance clearly states that managers need to ensure that stress risk assessments take place in their teams. As an organisation, BG Group was aware of the need to support managers in putting the guidance into action, and recognised the importance of helping them understand the role of pressure and stress in influencing individuals' performance and health. This approach would show managers the value of positively managing pressure as well as assist them in putting the guidance into practice.



As a reminder...

PRESSURE

We all need pressure to help us give our best performance.

STRESS

If pressure is too high or too low, this could affect our performance, wellbeing, and ultimately our health.

BG Group required all managers based at their headquarters in Reading, UK to attend a tailored training day, developed in partnership with The Keil Centre. During these evidence-based interactive sessions, strong links were made between pressure and performance, people management practices and management of psychological health, and the role of individual differences. Despite some initial scepticism about the topic from a few managers, feedback has been consistently positive, with 96% of those attending saying they would recommend the course to a colleague.

What comes next?

To date, over 250 managers have attended and it is expected that all managers based in Reading will have attended the training by the end of 2008. Already, stress risk assessments are happening and training is being rolled out to BG's assets around the globe.

"On reflection, the effectiveness of this project depended on engaging managers in an informed debate about pressure management. The easy route would have been to write the policy and hope for the best. Increasing managers' knowledge and supporting behaviour change is harder, but ultimately much more effective".



Chiara Amati, The Keil Centre